

## MY CHANGING BODY

# How should I clean my genitalia?

KEY WORDS

genitalia | hygiene | penis | vagina



Your whole body, including your genitals, requires proper hygiene. But genitalia especially, due to their connection to the system responsible for reproduction and urination (urogenital-reproductive system), should be given special care in this case.

Therefore, it's best to shower or bathe daily or every other day. During hotter periods such as the summer months, you may find it necessary to wash your body more often.

Experts recommend using **ph-neutral cleansers, gels or just water** for cleaning your genitals, in order to keep the body chemistry of this area balanced.



Experts also recommend cleansing the intimate areas **after each sexual intercourse**, to help avoid urinary tract infections. Of course, there's no need to rush to the bathroom immediately after, but it's advisable to urinate and then clean yourself shortly after sexual activity. Some experts also suggest washing the intimate areas after each bowel movement. Regular cleansing is also important **during menstruation**.

Some best practices that can help you are:

- It is important to wash **the external areas of the vagina, not the inside**. Sponges or scrubbers should not be used, as they can harbour bacteria.
  - Always wash from front to back to avoid transferring bacteria from the anal area to the vaginal!
- Washing the penis should begin with gently moving the foreskin back and rinsing the organ with warm, running water. It's safest to wash the penis with your hands. As mentioned, sponges are a natural breeding ground for bacteria, and their rough surface can irritate the delicate skin in this area.
  - The direction of washing is also important — so start from the tip and work your way towards the base.



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No matter your habits, take care to feel comfortable in your body, and keep all intimate hygiene within common sense and following these best practices.



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